

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-14 (Canceled).

15. (New) A process control method comprising:

storing, for each customer of a product, operator assigning information in which each production process to be performed to produce the product is assigned to a particular operator of a plurality of operators;

inputting order information to order a product for a customer, said order information including customer identification information to identify the ordering customer and product identification information to identify the ordered product; and

assigning an operator to perform each production process to be performed to produce the ordered product, by referring to the operator assigning information corresponding to the ordering customer, based on the product identification information in the order information.

15. (New) The process control method of claim 15, further comprising:

storing processing time assigning information including a processing time necessary for each said operator to perform each said production process;

extracting the processing time necessary for the operator assigned to each said production process to perform the assigned production process, and totaling the extracted processing times to calculate an overall production time for the product; and

10 outputting the overall production time.

17. (New) The process control method of claim 15, further comprising:

storing dependence assigning information which identifies whether a processing time necessary to perform each said 5 production process is dependent on equipment or the operator;

judging whether the processing time for each said production process depends on the equipment or the operator, with reference to the dependence assigning information; and

assigning the operator to each said production process, with 10 reference to a result of the judgment.

18. (New) The process control method of claim 15, further comprising:

storing: (i) dependence assigning information which identifies whether a processing time necessary to perform each 5 said production process is dependent on equipment or the operator, and (ii) processing time assigning information

including a processing time necessary for each said operator to perform each said production process; and

calculating an overall production time for the product based
10 on (i) production processing capacity of the equipment, for each production process for which the processing time is dependent on the equipment, and (ii) production processing capacity of an operator, for each production process for which the processing time is dependent on the operator, with reference to the
15 processing time assigning information.

19. (New) The process control method in claim 18, wherein at least one of the operator assigning information and the dependence assigning information is set based on at least one of skill of the operator and a relationship between the customer and the operator.

20. (New) The process control method of claim 15, further comprising:

5 dispatching a material from a first place at which the ordering customer places an order to produce the ordered product from a material belonging to the customer to a second place at which the product is produced from the material, based on the order information; and

utilizing the material and the order information at different timings to produce the product at the second place.

21. (New) A computer-readable medium having a process control program stored thereon which is executable by a computer to cause the computer to perform a process comprising:

inputting order information which includes information to
5 identify a customer who orders a product and information to identify the product; and

assigning an operator to perform each production process required to produce the product, based on the product identified by the order information, by referring to operator assigning
10 information in which each said production process is assigned to be performed by a particular operator of a plurality of operators;

wherein the operator assigning information is prepared and stored for each customer.

22. (New) The computer-readable medium of claim 21, wherein the process performed by the computer further comprises:

storing processing time assigning information including a processing time necessary for each said operator to perform each
5 said production process;

extracting the processing time necessary for the operator assigned to each said production process to perform the assigned production process, and totaling the extracted processing times to calculate an overall production time for the product; and
10 outputting the overall production time.

23. (New) The computer-readable medium of claim 21, wherein the process performed by the computer further comprises:

storing dependence assigning information which identifies whether a processing time necessary to perform each said 5 production process is dependent on equipment or the operator;

judging whether the processing time for each said production process depends on the equipment or the operator, with reference to the dependence assigning information; and

assigning the operator to each said production process, with 10 reference to a result of the judgment.

24. (New) The computer-readable medium of claim 21, wherein the process performed by the computer further comprises:

storing: (i) dependence assigning information which identifies whether a processing time necessary to perform each 5 said production process is dependent on equipment or the operator, and (ii) processing time assigning information

including a processing time necessary for each said operator to perform each said production process; and

calculating an overall production time for the product based
10 on (i) production processing capacity of the equipment, for each production process for which the processing time is dependent on the equipment, and (ii) production processing capacity of an operator, for each production process for which the processing time is dependent on the operator, with reference to the
15 processing time assigning information.

25. (New) The computer-readable medium of claim 24, wherein at least one of the operator assigning information and the dependence assigning information is set based on at least one of skill of the operator and a relationship between the customer and the operator.